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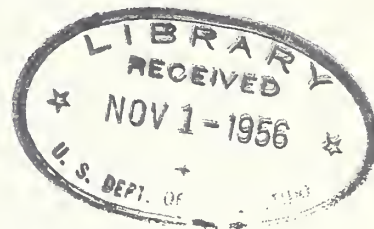
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NATIONAL FOREST RECREATION

Facts About the Recreation Situation

In the National Forests



Americans made 40 million visits to the National Forests in 1954. They visited the Forests to fish, ski, hunt, swim, ride, hike, or look and sit. The largest single recreation activities were camping and picnicking. Of the 40 million visits, 20 million were to the National Forest campgrounds and picnicking areas provided by the U. S. Forest Service.

Public recreation areas have simple facilities

Facilities provided by the Forest Service at public camp and picnic grounds are limited to those essential for safety, sanitation, and minimum comfort and convenience for the public. They include fireplaces, tables, safe water supplies, toilets, and garbage pits. More than 4,500 of these public recreation areas have been developed over the years.

Many recreation facilities have now deteriorated

Most of the facilities were constructed by the CCC boys during the '30s. Repair and replacement have not kept up with wear and tear and increased use. Congestion results in abuse to facilities and hastens their deterioration.

Acute sanitation problems exist in many areas

Many National Forest camping and picnicking areas no longer meet the sanitation requirements of State laws and are a hazard to public health and safety.

Recreation facilities now taxed beyond their limits

When a designated recreation area is overcrowded, many people camp or picnic on unimproved areas where there is danger of polluting water that is used for domestic purposes. The danger of costly fires is increased when campers build their fires in places not equipped with fireplaces.

Inadequate facilities mean public dissatisfaction. Overcrowding reduces the enjoyment of those using the area. It may also spoil the area for future recreational use. Attractive ground cover is destroyed; dust accumulates; the trampling weakens or kills mature trees.

Use is so heavy at many of the more popular areas that available caretakers are not able to provide adequately for cleanup of camping and picnicking areas, removal of garbage and debris, care of latrines and maintenance of water systems. Many camps are necessarily left without attention for weeks at a time. In such cases the accumulation of garbage and trash is deplorable. It is up to campers to do all they can to keep camps clean and help lessen this accumulation.

Recreational use of the National Forests is increasing

The annual total of recreation visitors is now more than double what it was before World War II. Since the war the increase has been especially rapid. In 1946, 18 million visits were reported. In 1954, 40 million, an increase of 122%.

Opportunities for wholesome, inexpensive outdoor recreation are important to the health and well-being of the American people. The 149 National Forests, located in 38 States, Alaska and Puerto Rico, are the most extensive outdoor recreation areas in America owned by all the people.

National Forest recreation is important from the business standpoint. Many business enterprises are supported by tourist and vacation activities. National Forest recreation is the economic backbone of many communities.

What is needed

Existing campground facilities need to be better maintained. Grounds need to be cleaned up and garbage removed more frequently. Water supplies should be made and kept safe. New camp and picnic areas equipped with modest but essential fire-prevention and sanitation facilities are needed to take care of the overflow from existing camps and the increasing numbers of outdoor recreationists. Meantime, each user is urged to do a bit more than his or her share to keep these recreation areas clean and neat.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE

